
Western Kentucky University news for the Council on Postsecondary Education, November 2012

For more WKU news, visit www.wku.edu/news.

WKU enrollment up for 15th straight year; fall 2012 total at 21,124

For the 15th consecutive year, fall enrollment at WKU is up. Total enrollment is 21,124, up 76 students from fall 2011. WKU saw increases in the number of first-time students in the Honors College (137), African-American students (72), Hispanic students (63), non-resident international students (115), high school students taking dual credit courses (237) and doctoral students (24). The profile of the freshman class remains strong with an average ACT score of 22 and high school grade-point average of 3.14. In the Honors College, the average ACT score of the incoming class is 29 with a high school GPA of 3.85.

WKU President Gary Ransdell praised the work of several offices who helped students struggling with paying tuition stay enrolled. "We dropped about 900 for non-payment and reinstated 336 after working with them," Dr. Ransdell said. "In the past we would have lost all of them. This salvaged their academic careers." See <http://wkunews.wordpress.com/2012/10/26/regents-enrollment2012/>

WKU tops goal, raises \$202.3 million during New Century of Spirit Campaign

WKU has declared success in the New Century of Spirit Campaign by exceeding the campaign's \$200 million goal. According to Kathryn Costello, WKU's Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations, a total of \$202,305,534 raised to support students, faculty, programs and capital projects.

"The completion of this Campaign is a major barometer in how the transformation of WKU has unfolded over the last 15 years," President Gary Ransdell said. "Our first Campaign raised \$102 million between 1998 and 2003. This Campaign, with more than \$200 million in gifts and pledges, marks dramatic progress in the philanthropic behavior of our faculty and staff, alumni and friends. When our alumni are giving sacrificially to allow us to become 'a leading American university with international reach,' we are much more capable of achieving and much more inclined to pursue that vision."

Costello said the historic Campaign "has resulted in remarkable gifts that benefit students, faculty and the campus as a whole. The stories and the people who gave so generously to WKU will be part of the fabric of the University forever." See <http://wkunews.wordpress.com/2012/09/21/campaign-final/>

One highlight of the campaign celebration was the introduction of the "Hilltopper of the Century," a video thank you to the nearly 43,000 donors who made the New Century of Spirit Campaign a success. To view the rap-style video starring WKU student Marrquon Bartee, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poikcRPfXwI>



WKU President Gary Ransdell announced the final campaign total on Sept. 21.

2 Gatton Academy seniors recognized as National Achievement semifinalists

Gatton Academy seniors Charvinia Neblett of Russellville and Henry Uradu of Russell have been recognized as semifinalists in the National Achievement Scholarship Program, an honor that potentially opens the door to college scholarship opportunities.

The National Achievement Scholarship Program is an academic competition established in 1964 specifically to honor scholastically talented black American high school students and provide college scholarships for a substantial number of the most outstanding participants in each annual competition. More than 1.5 million students take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test each year and approximately 160,000 students request consideration for the National Achievement Program. About 1,600 of the highest scoring applicants for the National Achievement Program are honored as semifinalists. See <http://wkunews.wordpress.com/2012/10/01/gatton-achievement-semifinalists/>

Energy savings initiatives helped WKU reduce summer usage, utility costs

During a summer that saw more students taking more classes, more building space being occupied and the most 105-degree days since the 1930s, WKU used energy savings initiatives to reduce its electrical consumption and cut its utility bills.

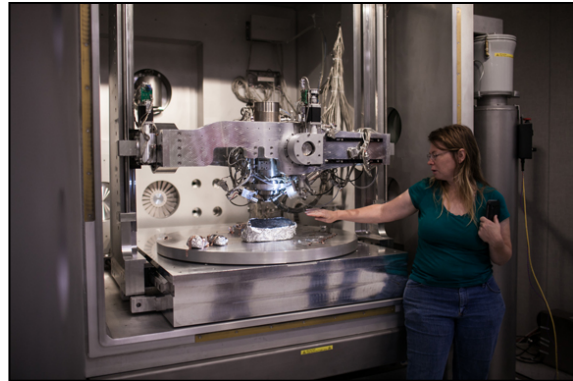
WKU's electrical usage was 16.35 million kilowatt hours from June through August – 1.29 percent lower than last summer's 16.57 million kilowatt hours, and resulted in savings of \$37,399 compared to 2011. The usage rate of 3.25 kWh per square foot was 1.81 percent lower than 2011's 3.31 kWh per square foot, an impressive accomplishment considering that total building square footage increased from 5,002,879 in 2011 to 5,028,879 in 2012.

Dale Dyer, plant operations manager for WKU Facilities Management, attributes the reductions to improvements made through an Energy Savings Performance Contract, to changes in WKU's summer office hours and to individual efforts by faculty, staff and students to conserve energy. See <http://wkunews.wordpress.com/2012/09/25/energy-savings-2012/>

Researcher uses NOVA Center's LC-SEM to examine Jurassic era fossils

A researcher from Northern Kentucky University is taking advantage of the 21st century technology available at WKU's NOVA Center to examine dinosaur bones and other fossils that are 160 million years old.

Dr. Janet Bertog, associate professor of Paleontology & Stratigraphy at NKU, brought nine samples in September for examination at the NOVA Center's Large Chamber Scanning Electron Microscope (LC-SEM).



Dr. Janet Bertog, associate professor of Paleontology and Stratigraphy at Northern Kentucky University, brought nine Jurassic era fossils to WKU's NOVA Center for examination in the Large Chamber-Scanning Electron Microscope.



A section of the femur of a sauropod dinosaur was among the fossils examined at WKU's NOVA Center.

The fossils, all found in the Morrison Formation in central Utah, included a section of a femur of a sauropod dinosaur; the jaw of a small mammal; a tooth from an allosaurus; and samples that may be a new species of iguana.

The LC-SEM – the only one of its kind at a North American university – performs scientific, microscopic analysis of large samples, allowing for investigation of large manufactured objects or historical artifacts without destroying them.

Data from the LC-SEM will allow Dr. Bertog to examine growth rings in the femur that may help determine how seasonal and climate variations affected the course of the sauropod's life. That data will be compared to chemical analysis of the sample that shows the animal may have died from drought conditions. "This is the last little piece we need," she said. See

<http://wkunews.wordpress.com/2012/09/20/nova-dinosaur-samples/>

WKU Army ROTC cadet ranks among top 10 in nation on Order of Merit List

WKU Army ROTC cadet Rachelle G. Boucher captured the number eight spot in the prestigious top 10 national Order of Merit List, out of almost 5,600 graduating cadets. The OML ranks all Army ROTC seniors across the nation, with the top 20 percent earning the designation of Distinguished Military Graduate. This year there are 1,119 Distinguished Military Graduates.

Already the holder of a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science from WKU (2010), she is pursuing a Masters in Sports Administration degree. She is on track to receive her degree and be commissioned in May 2013.

Cadets are ranked on the Order of Merit List by achieving superior grade point averages, strong athletic performance in the Army physical fitness test and college athletic participation, proving their worth as exceptional leaders in their college ROTC training, and their performance at the Leader Development and Assessment Course at Joint Base Lewis-McChord outside Tacoma, Wash. See

<http://wkunews.wordpress.com/2012/09/27/rotc-boucher/>